

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Use of zinc, silver or copper gluconate as an antimicrobial agent for the manufacture of substrates based on fibres, especially cellulosic fibres.

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2. Use according to claim 1 wherein the substrate is based on paper fibres.

3. Use according to claim 2 wherein the substrate is a sanitary article, a hygiene article or a food packaging article.

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4. Use according to one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the concentration of antimicrobial agent in the substrate is about 0.01 to 10% by weight, preferably about 0.05 to 1% by weight.

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5. Use according to one of claims 1 to 4 wherein the antimicrobial agent is zinc gluconate.

6. Substrate based on fibres, especially cellulosic fibres, comprising zinc, silver or copper gluconate as an antimicrobial agent.

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7. Substrate according to claim 6 which is a sanitary article such as a hand wipe, toilet paper, a handkerchief, an impregnated diaper or absorbent paper.

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8. Substrate according to claim 6 which is a feminine hygiene article such as an absorbent pad, or a baby article such as an impregnated diaper.

9. Substrate according to claim 6 which is a food packaging article such as a nonwoven or absorbent paper for meat trays.

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10. Substrate according to claim 6 which is a nonwoven based on paper fibres, obtained by the dry method.

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11. Substrate according to one of claims 6 to 10 which comprises from about 0.01 to 10% by weight, preferably from about 0.05 to 1% by weight, of antimicrobial agent.

12. Substrate according to one of claims 6 to 11 wherein the antimicrobial agent is zinc gluconate.